

CHAPTER 6

UTILITIES



City of Liberty Lake Comprehensive Plan

A. Introduction



The Washington State Growth Management Act requires that cities and counties develop a Utilities Element as part of the comprehensive planning process. Specifically, this element must address the future needs for electrical, natural gas, and telecommunication lines. Additionally, public sewer and water are currently provided to the majority of the City by the Liberty Lake Sewer & Water District and solid waste management and recycling are provided to the City by Waste Management. At the present time, The City of Liberty Lake is able to meet the demands of its residents for electricity, natural gas, and telephone service, as well as sewer, water, and solid waste management. However, the City does not provide all of these services, it relies on other entities to provide some of them. The City will need to continue to monitor and coordinate with the variety of public and private contractors to ensure that future needs will also be met.

Utilities Element Vision Statements¹

1. Adequate water supply and sewer services to accommodate growth
2. Increased promotion of technology infrastructure

B. History and Background

Major Issues

- The City of Liberty Lake is supplied with electricity and natural gas to satisfy the current demand for power needs. However, The City anticipates future growth in residential and commercial development. Capacity should be sufficient to accommodate the anticipated needs of the community.
- As the City of Liberty Lake continues to grow, existing programs should be adequate to meet the needs for solid waste disposal.
- Water rights should be adequate to accommodate the City's future water supply need.
- Future demand for wastewater treatment will require expansion of the existing facilities.

Inventory of Utilities

Electrical System

Electricity is currently provided to the City by Avista Utilities. The capabilities of the electrical system's capacity can be quantified in terms of the capacity of its distribution substations.

Power systems are capable of serving an amount of electric demand measured in kilowatts. The number of customers served depends on the demand of each individual customer and varies from a few kilowatts for a small residential customer to 50,000 kilowatts for a large industrial customer. The power system is built to a uniform design throughout the service area. The design provides a networked transmission system of substations (with automatic protection to limit



¹ Vision Statements were created by the Planning Commission and City Council to reflect citizen comments.

the extent of any problems) and distribution systems (with uniform system-wide design). The designs follow the industry practice where the failure of one major component at any one time does not interrupt service to all customers.

Natural Gas

Avista Utilities currently provides natural gas to customers in the City of Liberty Lake.

Telecommunication System



Residents and businesses in the City have multiple options for the provision of telecommunications services. High capacity Internet facilities will be encouraged throughout the community, particularly in land designations which support industrial, commercial, and high density residential uses. The City will adopt and enforce strict guidelines to which telecommunications facilities, including cellular and digital phone towers, built within City limits must adhere. Cable and digital television service may be offered in the City through multiple providers that have obtained a franchise agreement.

Sewer and Water

Public sewer and water are currently provided to the majority of the City by the Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District. It is anticipated that sewer and water will become municipal City services as allowed by state law under RCW 35.13A, within the 20-year planning window. The City has a wastewater treatment plant that is located at the northern end of the City, east of Harvard Rd. There are several wellheads for the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer throughout the City. Currently, the Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District is also involved with stormwater control and protection of Liberty Lake which is located south of the City.

Solid Waste Management

A number of responsibilities are designated to the County and cities in order to implement the Spokane County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan. The plan states that cities need to provide for collection of solid waste and ensure the provision of the minimum levels of collection service for recyclables. Cities are also asked to enforce litter control ordinances. Cities are authorized under the plan to regulate and plan for the collection of recyclables and to adopt and implement the solid waste plan.

The City of Liberty Lake currently contracts with Waste Management Systems for collection of residential and commercial waste. The City does not require mandatory collection of solid waste, that is, residents are not required to subscribe to refuse collection services. Waste Management bills its customers directly for this service.

Waste currently is transported to a central collection site where it is consolidated and shipped to a permanent disposal site, including a trash burner.

Recycling

The County's solid waste management plan adopts a waste reduction and recycling goal. The City offers a residential curbside recycling program under its contract with Waste Management. Residents subscribing to solid waste pickup service automatically receive recycling and are offered yard waste pick-up services. Recycled material is picked up every week and yard waste is treated as trash and also collected weekly.

Future Needs Analysis

Electrical System

In addition to ongoing maintenance, the electrical facilities serving the area will need to have their capacity increased to serve additional customers in the 20-year period. This could result in upgrading some of the local distribution lines in the area. Additionally, the City of Liberty Lake will require undergrounding of all newly installed or extensively modified utilities 13kV or under.

Natural Gas

Avista Utilities is mandated by the Public Utilities Commission to be capable of supplying customers in the City.

Telecommunications System

Several providers of telecommunications systems serve residents and businesses in the City and more providers are both expected and welcome. The City maintains current information on the available providers.

Sewer and Water

It is anticipated that public sewer and water, which are currently provided to the majority of the City by the Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District, will become municipal City services as allowed by state law under RCW 35.13A, within the 20-year planning window. Services will be maintained at or above existing standards.

Solid Waste Management and Recycling

The City of Liberty Lake expects to continue contracting with Waste Management for solid waste management and recycling services.

C. Goals and Policies

Goal

U.1: To ensure that energy, communication, solid waste disposal facilities and services, sewer capacity, and water supply needed to support current and future development are available when they are needed.

Policies

U.1.1: The City does not currently provide energy, communication, or solid waste disposal facilities. These facilities and services are provided by private companies. To facilitate the coordination of these services, the City shall continue to exchange population forecasts, development plans, and technical data with the agencies identified in this plan.

U.1.2: By adopting this comprehensive plan, the City of Liberty Lake adopts the following level of service guidelines:

- a. collection service for solid waste shall be available to all properties within the city;
- b. electrical service, natural gas, cable television, sewer, water, and telecommunications services shall be available to all residents and businesses; and
- c. The City will encourage the development of advanced telecommunications services, and where possible, include a level of service provision in franchise or license agreements with providers of cable television services.

U.1.3: The City's land use planning shall be coordinated with the facility and utility planning activities of the City's utility providers by ensuring that providers of public services and private utilities use the elements of this Plan in planning future facilities.

U.1.4: The City will:

- a. adopt procedures for the City's review of and comment on proposed actions and policies by public and private providers of public services; and
- b. ensure procedures whereby development proposals are reviewed by various providers of services, such as school districts, sewer, water, and fire departments, for available capacity to accommodate the development, and/or needed system improvement.

U.1.5: All reasonable steps should be taken to encourage energy conservation. The City shall encourage the location of various alternative energy sources where they have, and will continue to have, best year-round access to a solar path, wind, etc.

Goal

U.2: To ensure the availability of an adequate and effective recycling program which maintains public health, environmental, and land use quality to serve the needs of City residents.

Policies

U.2.1: Decrease the amount of solid waste entering landfill sites, extend the useful life of regional landfills and transfer stations, and minimize natural resource depletion by continuing and building upon the City's current solid waste recycling programs through Waste Management. These programs include residential curbside recycling and may include nonresidential programs as state law allows, variable can rate programs, waste reduction and recycling education programs, and procurement of recycled products, including use of such products in parks and public works projects when economically feasible.

U.2.2: Develop and implement education programs to encourage and promote waste reduction, recycling, and alternatives to use of toxic products.

Goal

U.3: Ensure that the emerging telecommunications industry and services positively impact the City by establishing clear local guidelines and standards for exercising local authority with respect to the regulation of telecommunication providers and services.

Policies

U.3.1: The City shall develop a telecommunications program or plan that may include regulatory measures to ensure that the following general concepts are implemented:

- a. promote competition among telecommunication service providers;
- b. protect the infrastructure and aesthetic quality of the City;
- c. encourage shared use of public facilities and the right-of-way;
- d. minimize impacts on the public and the environment;
- e. seek reasonable compensation for use of the City's right-of-ways property and structures;
- f. treat all service providers equally and fairly; and

- g. promote and encourage the availability of services to local residents and to the City government.

Goal

U.4: Coordinate private and public sanitary sewer and water planning and services in order to promote efficient service, protect natural resources, and ensure the orderly development of the City of Liberty Lake, consistent with adopted plans and policies.

Policies

U.4.1: Sewer and water system planning should be consistent with anticipated population growth and developed in coordination with comprehensive plan land use policies. Service standards for the water supply shall be no less than 800 gallons per day. All developed properties within the City are required to be connected to the public sewer system.

U.4.2: The location and capacity of existing and planned sewer facilities, including the sewer and water conveyance systems, shall be important factors when determining the intensity and/or land use designations, pursuant to the Land Use element of this plan.

U.4.3: Prior to approval of any proposed development inside the city boundaries, the developer will be required to demonstrate the adequacy of the planned sewer and water conveyance system capacity.

U.4.4: Prohibit the extension of water service to new development if such extension will decrease the level of service of the existing water system below the established minimum level of service.

U.4.5: Ensure water system planning utilizes efficiencies of scale and geographic continuity.

U.4.6: Provision of water services and construction of water service lines or other water system facilities that promote urban development outside the Urban Growth Area boundaries (UGAs) will be discouraged. (see CF.6.4)

U.4.7: Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.110(4), public sewer service shall not be extended or expanded, including new connections where connections fees have not been collected, outside the Urban Growth Area boundary, except in response to an immediate threat to public health, safety, or the environment, or when necessary for the protection of aquifers designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. (see CF.7.7)

U.4.8: Ensure that public water and sewer services be provided in such amounts and such costs that limits the over allocation of ERUs to any customer while ensuring sufficient peak capacity.

Goal

U.5: As noted in other elements of this Comprehensive Plan, the City must prevent a degradation of the scenic resources of the community by regulating the placement of linear infrastructure such as utility lines, sewer lines, and other facilities.

Policies

U.5.1: Direct placement of telecommunication, cable television lines, and other utility facilities underground, at the rear of properties, or in alleyways and require undergrounding of all newly installed or extensively modified utilities, 13kV or under, to protect viewsheds and corridors. (see LU.5.6 & D.1.14)

U.5.2: Encourage joint planning of linear infrastructure such as transportation, water, sewer, power, and telecommunications lines.

Goal

U.6: Provide Utilities that are consistent and available to support land use policies. (see Goal CF.15 and supporting policies in the Capital Facilities element of this plan)